

APPROVED JUNE 11TH

**CITY OF EDMONDS
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

May 28, 2014

Vice Chair Tibbott called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Neil Tibbott, Vice Chair
Ian Duncan
Bill Ellis
Philip Lovell
Carreen Nordling Rubenkönig
Valerie Stewart
Daniel Robles

STAFF PRESENT

Shane Hope, Development Services Director
Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Karin Noyes, Recorder

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Todd Cloutier, Chair (excused)

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER LOVELL MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2014 BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. BOARD MEMBER ELLIS SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Darrell Haug, Edmonds, thanked the Board Members for their service. As volunteers, they work hard for the City and their job is very complicated and rewarding for the City.

PUBLIC HEARING ON A PROPOSED PLAN AND FORM-BASED CODE GUIDING FUTURE COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTGATE COMMERCIAL AREA: The Westgate Commercial Area consists of the Neighborhood Business (BN), Commercial Business (BC) and Commercial Business-Edmonds Way (BC-EW) Zones near the intersection of SR-104 (Edmonds Way) and 100th Avenue West.

Mr. Chave explained that this is a public hearing on a proposed plan and form-based code that will guide future commercial and mixed use development in the Westgate Commercial Area. The proposed amendments include modifications to the text of the Comprehensive Plan addressing the Westgate Commercial area, establishment of a new Mixed Use-Westgate (MU-W) Zone, and Development Code changes to apply the new MU-W zone to the Westgate Commercial Area. The proposed amendments are intended to provide opportunities for additional development intensity within the commercial area, as well as additional protection for the surrounding slopes.

Mr. Chave displayed a map of the Westgate Commercial Area, emphasizing that no zoning changes are being proposed for properties outside of the study area. He provided a brief explanation about why the study came about:

- There is a fair amount of growth in the region, and Edmonds made the choice a few decades ago to not zone new areas for commercial or multi-family (RM) residential development. Instead, the City has focused future growth into existing areas that were already established for those kinds of uses. Because the City is largely built out, the idea is to focus on enhancing areas that are already set for higher-intensity uses.
- A change in population has occurred and will continue to occur, and it is expected to significantly change what areas look like in the future. The aging population, combined with the recent economic issues, has created some challenges related to housing choices. The City looks at the Westgate area as an opportunity for a different mixture of housing and services than has traditionally been there, and this would match the trend in the region. There is a real interest in combining commercial and residential development into small centers that build on the opportunities for enhanced transit and more walkable and vital environments.
- Focusing development in the already developed areas that have the services to support the intensity will result in less impetus to have additional sprawl. The Puget Sound area has experienced a tremendous amount of sprawl over the last few decades, which is not sustainable going into the future. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and its member cities have grappled with how to be smarter with future development so as not to compromise the resources and environment that make Puget Sound so attractive. Those who care about climate change and environmental issues recognize that compact development that is more reliant on transit and less reliant on automobiles and roads has potential benefits in the future. Local governments cannot do much to address climate change, but they have a lot of influence over land use and transportation issues that can reduce the environmental footprint of development over time.

Mr. Chave reviewed that the Westgate planning process started in 2010, with the City enlisting the help of the University of Washington's Green Futures Lab and the Cascade Land Conservancy. Before starting their design work, the team conducted a survey of existing amenities and had a fairly extensive public process in early 2011. This effort was followed by a number of public workshops to review design alternatives, and citizens were invited to participate in an on-line survey. Throughout the public process, people indicated a desire for more public open spaces and uses that complement each other. They were particularly interested in improving walkability and circulation. A traffic study was also done in conjunction with the planning process to analyze what future development scenarios might look like.

Mr. Chave referred to the draft Westgate Plan and form-based code (Attachment 1) and highlighted the following features:

- Rather than using strictly traditional zoning, the proposed zoning incorporates some elements of a form-based approach. Traditional zoning focuses specifically on uses allowed and the building envelope (setbacks, building height, etc), and says very little about what takes place inside the building. A form-based code focuses more on the overall design of a project and typically includes design standards to address the relationship of buildings to the streets and other public places.
- The proposed plan is based on the idea of creating a mixed use, walkable and compact center. It includes improved bicycle and pedestrian access and enhancing the identity of Westgate. It also discusses privatizing amenity spaces (places where people gather), promoting civic and private investment (offering incentives for developers to provide public amenity spaces), encouraging and/or requiring green and sustainable features, and improving stormwater systems that deal with runoff on site rather than discharging to the citywide system.
- The current standard zoning addresses height and setbacks in a one-size-fits-all fashion and does not address a development's location in the Westgate area or its relationship to the street. The proposed plan and code is intended to address these subtleties and support the demographic trends by providing different mixes of uses than what you would typically see. For example, younger people would like to live in Edmonds and older people would like to stay in Edmonds, but the housing opportunities are limited. The idea is to provide opportunities for more diverse housing that will benefit the community as a whole.

- The proposed plan calls for amenity spaces (sidewalks, plazas, lawns, small parks, etc.) to be interspersed throughout the Westgate area. It also calls for development to be located closer to the street to encourage a more active street life. The plan calls out a series of streetscape standards and building types. While the specific locations vary, most of the development in Westgate will be commercial, with some opportunities for residential uses primarily above the ground floor.
- The plan discusses green features and offers options for incorporating low-impact development elements to improve the sustainability aspect of the project.

Mr. Chave explained that the Planning Board conducted an extensive review of the initial plan presented by the University of Washington and made the following key changes:

- The initial plan mandated that buildings be located at the street front. While the current proposal encourages buildings to be located closer to the street, it does not mandate a rigid conformity.
- The initial plan focused development outward, with buildings organized around the SR-104 and 100th Avenue West intersection. The current proposal calls out a quadrant-based system that focuses on creating circulation, buildings and spaces within each of the four quadrants formed by the intersection (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest). That means most of the circulation would be internal and away from the busy streets. An example of a development in Hillsboro, Oregon, was provided to further illustrate this concept.
- The initial plan recommended a base height of between one and four stories. A fifth story would have been allowed in certain locations. The current proposal caps the height in most places at three stories, with an opportunity to obtain four stories only where the nearby slopes are higher and where no residences are nearby. The additional height would require the developer to incorporate a certain level of green features into the project, as well. On properties where there are no adjacent slopes, heights would be limited to two stories.
- The initial plan called for street setbacks of 8 feet. After further discussion, the Board decided it would be appropriate to increase the street setback to 12 feet to provide a wider street interface and to assure that turn pockets could be provided for traffic access if needed.
- The proposed plan includes a stepback requirement for development radiating from the intersection of SR-104 and 100th Avenue West to maintain openness and create a sense of place.

Mr. Chave explained that, when considering appropriate building heights, the Board carefully reviewed the topography of the properties. He provided a topographic map that identifies the locations of the steep slopes in relationship to the proposed building heights. He noted that the steepest slopes are located in the northeast (40 to 50 feet) and southwest (65 to 70 feet) quadrants. In these locations, a 45-foot building (3 to 4 stories) would remain below the height of the residential properties on top of the slope. The slope in the southeast quadrant is between 30 and 35 feet, and the northwest quadrant is relatively flat. Building height in these quadrants would be limited to just two and three stories.

Mr. Chave observed that the existing zoning throughout the area allows a height of up to 25 feet, and requires a 15-foot setback. The Board has discussed concern that the 15-foot setback requirement does little to protect the slopes. Because they are primarily located in the commercial zones, developers can cut significantly into the slope without getting into the 15-foot setback area. He noted that the 20 to 30-foot retaining wall that was constructed behind the Walgreens building was code compliant, but not something the City wants to allow in the future. He said staff is considering language that would further protect the slopes and existing vegetation.

Mr. Chave provided a map that illustrated the various building heights allowed throughout the Westgate area. He noted that at the intersection of SR-104 and 100th Avenue West, building heights would be limited to just two stories at the street front. Additional height would be allowed if the upper stories are stepped back. He pointed out that development would be limited to just two stories on properties where there is very little topographic separation between the commercial and residential properties. Three and four story development would be allowed on properties that have greater slopes, with the residential development tucked above.

Mr. Chave explained that following the public hearing, the Planning Board will deliberate and discuss final changes to the draft proposal. An addition to changes brought forward by the Planning Board, staff will also propose some minor amendments for clarity. A final draft of the proposal will be brought back to the Board for review on June 11th, after which the Board will forward a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will hold an additional public hearing and make a final decision on the plan and proposed zoning changes. He encouraged members of the public to sign up on the mailing list so they can receive follow up information regarding the proposal.

Hank Landau, Edmonds, said he and his wife own commercial property on 100th Avenue West, just south of Bartells, as well as the residential property on top of the 70-foot slope. He said his understanding is that the current proposal would limit the height on his commercial property to 35 feet or three stories. He requested the Board consider changing the proposal to allow a height similar to what was developed on the adjacent Bartells property, which is 45 feet or four stories. He noted that this request would be consistent with the concept of allowing four-story development on properties where the slope is high and no residential development is nearby. He further noted that his property is joined on both sides by commercial uses.

Mr. Landau explained that a portion of his commercial property is higher than the street grade as a result of an approximately 10-foot bench that runs through the property. He requested that the proposed language be amended to allow him to cut into the bench so that the entire property could be developed at the same elevation. He acknowledged that doing so would require a retaining wall, but it would be nothing like the significant wall located behind Walgreens. He summarized his belief that what he is requesting would be consistent with the Board's guidance on height. A 45-foot tall building would still be 25 feet below the grade of the residential properties on top of the slope. He recognized the neighbor's concerns about not wanting businesses to look down on their properties, but his request would not adversely impact the residential properties or development located along 100th Avenue West.

Barbara Tipton, Edmonds, voiced concerned about the notion of the four quadrants. As a user of three of the four quadrants, she finds it difficult to navigate through the traffic because there are so many conflicts with people going back and forth throughout the quadrants. While she acknowledged that providing a pedestrian overpass going across SR-104 would be costly and require a significant amount of planning with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), it would help to resolve issues related to safety and navigation. Other than safety concerns, she said thinks the proposed plan is wonderful. She particularly likes the fact there will be residential options for young people to move into the community. The idea of apartments rather than condominiums is also very appealing. She commented that Seattle was recently identified as the fastest growing city in the nation, and young people who cannot afford the high rents may want to live in Edmonds, instead. She suggested that a health club and other amenities would be appropriate in the Westgate area. She is not concerned about allowing four-story development in some locations, and she specifically noted that in the Queen Anne Neighborhood of Seattle, there is residential development on top of a QFC. She said she likes the idea of public amenities, especially plazas to provide places for people to meet and greet.

Chuck Kalkwarf, Edmonds, said he lives directly behind the Landau's property and is totally against increasing the height limit from 35 feet to 45 feet. He recalled the earthquake that occurred several years ago, which caused the slope to slide down the back side of his property. He said he is against allowing the slopes to be cut out and replaced with retaining walls.

David Snow, Edmonds, said he has lived in his residential property adjacent to the Westgate Commercial Area for 55 years and has watched the neighborhood deteriorate because of growth. If the height limit is increased to 35 and 45 feet, any new commercial development would increase the residential property owners' view of rooftops, including the associated mechanical equipment. He said he is opposed to any commercial development that is greater than two stories, and he is also opposed to allowing any more of the hillside to be cut away. He said he doesn't understand why the City is proposing 35 and 45-foot height limits, when the height limit in most of the City is 25 feet.

Marsha Fischer, Edmonds, referred to the beautiful pictures provided by staff to illustrate a development with storefronts and gathering places in the back. However, the Board should keep in mind that the quadrants at Westgate are small and there would not likely be enough space for significant gathering places or a small farmer's market. She said she is against any height increase, as the area is already congested. She also doesn't believe that pedestrians will walk through the quadrants, particularly if they have to cross the street.

Natalie Shippen, Edmonds, said she is opposed to incentive zoning and form-based planning. She is opposed to their purpose (raising height limits in commercial Edmonds to make money) and the method for achieving that purpose (authorizing institutional bribery and cronyism). She suggested that if the Planning Board thinks open space, amenity space, green buildings, alternative transportation, and affordable housing are desirable and a benefit to the public, they can recommend that the City Council use its police power to mandate these requirements. Edmonds doesn't have to bribe developers to provide these amenities and then call it an incentive as a cover.

Ms. Shippen expressed her belief that form-based planning substitutes negotiation for the certainty of traditional zoning. The negotiators will be a developer and the Edmonds Mayor, who will work out a deal (development plan) vaguely guided by the pictures, sketches and piles of verbiage that comprises a form-based code. Form-based codes do not use numbers if it can be avoided. Instead it is about wheeling and dealing over a set of official brownie points, making it impossible for a resident of Edmonds to follow. She noted that the Compass Project is a good example of what can happen. The mayor and the developer wrote the code and then applied it. The developer got height increases and the public got two big eyesores. That's called cronyism. She emphasized that she does not want any Edmonds Mayor negotiating land-use decisions on her behalf. Many are Chamber of Commerce retreats who are unduly sympathetic to the problems of business and believe the questionable political theory that anything that benefits business will trickle down to the residents. She said she disagrees with that point of view and does not want a mayor who is any ex-realtor negotiating a flexible development agreement with a builder because she will likely lose.

Ms. Shippen summarized that the Board is being asked to approve measures that are devious, unnecessary and invite abuse. Edmonds does not need an official policy of bribery and cronyism to get growth. Westgate is growing well under the existing code, and the only change needed is removal of the footnotes beneath the height allowance chart that grant five-foot height increases for this and that. The code would then be simple, clear and protect the interests of the residents, as a good ordinance should. She recalled that a Westgate resident who protested the original zoning request was told that it was necessary in order for the project to be financially practical. So for the past seven years, the Planning Board has been inundated with piles of mindless planning fluff, the purpose of which is to install a system that will insure more bucks for developers. She suggested the Board learn from the mistakes of the Compass Project and ask what parts of the goals and policies for Westgate would not be implemented if the height limits remained at 25 and 35 feet.

Jim Dasher, Edmonds, questioned why lot 23315 has been designated for two-story development when the adjacent properties would be allowed three stories. He expressed concern that his residential property would look down on the tops of the commercial buildings. He recalled that numerous trees were removed as part of previous development, eliminating much of the greenbelt that separated the residential and commercial properties. He voiced concern about the aesthetic impacts three-story development would have on the residential properties above. He has lived in his home since 1978 and doesn't want the neighborhood messed up. He wants to keep the small, comfortable area and not commercialize it.

Susan Payne, Edmonds, said she lives north of QFC and likes the idea of having apartments available for young families. However, she would like to maintain the existing code rather than allow everything to be negotiated. Form-based codes leave too much up for grabs. While she supports green infrastructure, she requested that traffic and safety issues must be addressed. She observed that there are numerous access points for the commercial properties, making it difficult to travel along SR-104 and 100th Avenue West. There have been numerous traffic accidents in the area and a few fatalities because people are not as careful as they need to be. She is concerned that traffic will not be well managed in terms of safety, and greater height limits would only make the problem worse. She understands that working out a solution with WSDOT would be tricky, but critical to making sure they do not have any other traffic incidents.

Ron Wambolt, Edmonds, referred to Ms. Shippen's earlier comment about the negotiating power of the City's mayor. He clarified that the Mayor cannot negotiate development agreements with developers. If development agreements are allowed, the negotiation would be between the City Attorney and seven City Council Members. For those who have followed the City Council, it is clear that they do not let the Mayor get away with very much.

Dennis Fee, Edmonds, said he has lived on 100th Avenue West for 26 years. When he purchased his property, it was part of unincorporated Snohomish County (Esperance). It was later annexed into the City of Edmonds. Since becoming a citizen of Edmonds, his taxes have increased with no additional benefits. For example, although the City talks about wanting to serve the aging population, there are no crosswalks on 100th Avenue West in the nearly one-mile stretch of residential community

between SR-104 and 200th Avenue West. He said he does not support the concept of increasing population in the Westgate Commercial Area.

Eric Goodman, AICP, Edmonds, said he lives on 101st Place Southwest. He said he likes a lot of elements contained in the plan, particularly making Westgate more of a place, providing more activities and amenities, and accommodating the housing needs of a diverse population. He expressed concern that limiting the height to two to four stories would discourage redevelopment. Greater heights are needed in order for projects to pencil out. For those who have traffic concerns, he noted that taller buildings would actually slow traffic down. He agreed that more crosswalks are needed. He referred to recent developments in Vancouver, B.C., where green roofs have been used to reduce visual impacts from properties located uphill. He reminded the Board that the community is about to lose some of its bus service. More riders are needed to increase transit opportunities, and this requires that there be places for people to live, work and shop. He concluded that the proposed plan could make Westgate much better.

Dave Snow, Edmonds, encouraged the Planning Board to carefully consider the written comments he previously submitted via email to voice his opposition to the proposed plan.

Jim Dasher, Edmonds, said he received a letter from the City several weeks ago informing him of the proposed plan and advising that additional information was available on the City's website. He tried unsuccessfully to access the information, and later learned from City staff that it had not been posted yet. He suggested that the information should have been posted on line before the letter was sent out.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED AT 8:08 P.M.

Board Member Duncan asked Mr. Chave to clarify the City's jurisdiction related to SR-104 and 100th Avenue West. Mr. Chave answered that SR-104 is under WSDOT's control, but 100th Avenue West is controlled by the City. The University of Washington's initial plan included cross sections to illustrate potential changes on 100th Avenue West. While the plan makes reference to the changes, they were not actually included. The Engineering and Public Works Departments agreed that there might be some opportunity to improve crossing, particularly near the cemetery; but they felt a more detailed study would be needed before including the concept in the plan. They pointed out that most of the problems are associated with access points that were historically placed in less than ideal locations, and changes would likely occur as properties are redeveloped and access points are adjusted. Board Member Duncan summarized that the City does not have the ability to make changes on SR-104. Mr. Chave agreed that the City cannot add crosswalks on SR-104 without approval from the WSDOT, and he would be very surprised if they allowed additional crossings on the highway. He added that while an elevated crossing would be possible, it would be extremely costly.

Board Member Lovell expressed concern that the Planning Board, City Council, staff and community has spent the past four years reviewing plans, drawings, diagrams, maps, topography, traffic studies, building height, etc., yet members of the public still claim that they were not well informed. He reviewed that the effort started with an extensive public process guided by a team of students from the University of Washington. Their work culminated in a study titled, "Revisoning Westgate, which has been available for public review for the past three years. The current proposal is a watered-down version, which includes major changes and adjustments as a result of Planning Board's discussion and input from the public. He said he supports the proposed plan, as currently written, with the expectation that it will come before the Board once again for final review of minor tweaks before forwarding a recommendation to the City Council. He specifically made the following comments in support of the plan:

- Currently, the Westgate Commercial Area is zoned BN and BC. BN zoning already allows single-family residential development, and BC zoning allows multi-family residential in addition to commercial. The new code guidelines will enable mixed-use development with commercial/retail on the ground floor and multi-family residential on the upper floors in a variety of building formats.
- The proposed form-based code is intended to achieve some, if not all, of the goals spelled out within the merger of both the existing and studied guidelines as outlined.
- The plan will increase housing options for everyone without clamping down on new housing.

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- More housing contributes to transit-oriented development with locally or immediately available public transportation as well as retail services walkable from your dwelling. This is good for new residents, as well as existing residents within the neighborhood.
- The plan will accommodate increased density within the City in support for the Growth Management Act and Vision 2040.
- The plan will respond more actively to market demands for lower cost, smaller residential units to support population growth, as well as younger citizens and families.

In summary, Board Member Lovell expressed his belief that the proposed revised development standards for Westgate will result in increased flexibility to create more market-rate and consumer-driven options for housing, as well as retail uses. This will be good for retail business, good for growth, and good for renters and homebuyers of all income levels. He suggested that those objecting to potential growth due to perceived increased congestion are off base. Such growth represents vibrant activity due to shoppers, visitors and residents; and that's a good thing for Edmonds.

Board Member Ellis observed that it is more difficult to address issues when comments come in late in the planning process. However, he is grateful for the comments received. He reminded those in the audience that the final decision will be made by the City Council, and there will be another opportunity for citizens to voice their concerns at the public hearing before the City Council. He expressed his belief that the plan has gone through an extensive public process and addresses most of the concerns raised during the hearing. There are a number of people who just don't want Edmonds to change. While he understands this position, it is important to keep in mind that "no change" is not really an option given the City's responsibility to the Growth Management Act. The Board and City Council's responsibility is to manage the redevelopment as best they can to ensure it is done in a manner that is good for the City. The comments provided during the hearing will be helpful when putting together the final plan.

Board Member Stewart thanked the citizens who participated in the hearing, noting that their comments are very important to the Board. She agreed with Board Member Ellis that it is unfortunate that their comments have come late in the process, but the Board is committed to considering each one carefully. The plan has been in process for the past four years, and there have been numerous opportunities for public involvement. The Board has massaged the plan many times to make it more palatable to the public and ultimately the City Council, who will make the final decision. She asked the citizens to respect the work that has been done to date and encouraged them to review the plan in detail and then share their comments with the City Council.

Board Member Stewart recalled that many citizens expressed concern that the residential properties would look down on the commercial buildings. She explained that the Board carefully considered the topography of the area to make sure they were not allowing buildings that were too tall. She reminded those present that sustainable building trends include green roofs. In Seattle, in particular, there are beautiful green roofs with trees gardens and plazas. Buildings located uphill look down on these green spaces. Another new trend is to place HVAC systems and other rooftop equipment in obscured areas or inside buildings. She summarized that there are numerous options to make buildings more attractive. She observed that the proposed form-based code is a hybrid approach that blends with traditional zoning. The plan looks at the relationship of buildings to each other and the street, and the goal is to create a place where people want to live, work, play and spend time gathering. It will take decades for this to happen, but she is optimistic the plan will result in a much better place than it is now.

Board Member Robles observed that from the information provided, it appears that form-based zoning will require a lot more public interaction. In fact, the Board was forewarned in 2012 by other communities that extensive outreach would be necessary. The City has demonstrated the importance of public involvement by initiating a traffic analysis to address concerns raised by citizens regarding traffic impacts. He said he is confident that when the City Council receives the Board's recommendation, it will be accompanied by a well-founded packet of information to help them make their decision.

Board Member Rubenkönig agreed with Board Member Stewart that it will take decades for the plan to be fully implemented, and significant change will not happen overnight because there are many property owners who have numerous choices. She pointed out that the proposed plan would not mandate three and four-story development. They could be developed with one and two-story structures, if that is the desire of the property owners. She said her understanding is that

walking between the four quadrants is not a feature of the plan. Instead, the plan calls for people being able to park in one quadrant and walk to the various businesses within that one quadrant.

Board Member Rubenkonig observed that Westgate is a dilemma. The highway runs through a neighborhood, yet the City does not have the ability to change the roadway configuration. However, some of the changes proposed in the plan will help make the area more neighborly and walkable, which is a stated desire of Edmonds citizens. There is a national goal of getting all American's to walk more, and Edmonds can be a leader by encouraging development that is pedestrian friendly. She said she often sees people walking along 100th Avenue West and SR-104. People are drawn to the businesses located at Westgate, and the plan allows the potential for it to become more value to people living nearby.

Vice Chair Tibbott asked Mr. Chave to share how the zoning that existed at the time the Compass Development was built is different than what is proposed in the Westgate Plan. Mr. Chave explained that the Compass Development is located further east on SR-104 in the BC-EW zone. He pointed out that the parcels at the east end of the Westgate Commercial Area are also currently zoned BC-EW, which allows building heights up to 45 feet. Under the proposed plan, this BC-EW zoning would be replaced with the MU-W zoning, and the height limit would be reduced from 45 to 35 feet. In addition, the height limit for the properties currently zoned BC (on the north side of the Westgate Commercial Area) would be changed from 30 feet to 25 feet. However, most of the commercial area is currently zoned BN, which has a 25-foot height limit.

Mr. Chave expressed his belief that BN zoning was never appropriate for the Westgate Commercial Area, as it is more applicable to smaller neighborhood centers like Perrinville and Five Corners. Westgate has always been recognized as having "two personalities." It serves the neighborhood area, but it also draws people from a larger area via the highway. He referred to the traffic analysis, which was a detailed study predicated on the initial plan in which buildings were being allowed up to five stories. The analysis concluded that Level of Service (LOS), even under the five-story development scenario, would not significantly because the amount of traffic generated by redevelopment would pale in comparison to the traffic already in the area. The current plan caps height at two to four stories, so it is anticipated that traffic impacts would be even less, since the overall level of development would be reduced by about 20%.

Mr. Chave explained that the transportation analysis identified situations that needed to be fixed, but the only way these changes will happen is project-by-project as redevelopment occurs. Vice Chair Tibbott summarized that, as redevelopment occurs, some of the historic problems with ill-placed access points could be addressed.

Vice Chair Tibbott asked Mr. Chave to explain how the proposed plan would protect the slope that is located between the commercial and residential developments. Mr. Chave pointed out that most of the sloped areas are located within the commercial zones, and the 15-foot setback requirement in the current code offers very little protection. This is particularly true if a developer has the money, inclination and desire to maximize the property's development potential. Rather than using a uniform setback to protect the slope, staff is recommending that the setback be tied to the contours of the slope. At the next meeting, staff will bring back more information about how this concept could be incorporated into the plan.

Vice Chair Tibbott asked if staff is suggesting that the final Westgate Plan not allow retaining walls such as the one developed behind Walgreens. Mr. Chave answered affirmatively. Vice Chair Tibbott recalled that the Westgate Plan is intended to preserve the trees and vegetation along the slopes to provide privacy for home owners. Mr. Chave agreed that is the impetus in the plan, but there needs to be more specific guidance.

Vice Chair Tibbott asked Mr. Chave to explain what is different about the properties along 100th Avenue West in the southeast quadrant, including the Landau property, that warrants a 35 rather than 45-foot height limit. Mr. Chave pointed out that although there is a slope on these properties, it is not as significant as the slope that exists in areas where four-story development would be allowed. The 10-foot bench that runs through the properties also makes them unique. While it would be appropriate to allow excavation of the bench area to create a building site that is at street level, it would not be appropriate to allow significant excavation into the hillside. Again, he suggested the need to identify contour lines to protect the slope beyond the 15-foot setback requirement.

Vice Chair Tibbott asked staff to summarize the current level of development in the Westgate Commercial area, particularly in terms of vacant space and properties that are nearing the end of their reasonable life. Mr. Chave said he does not have information about vacancies, but there are properties within the Westgate Commercial Area that are ripe for redevelopment

with the right combination of zoning and property ownership. He noted that Bartells has expressed interest in relocating their building closer to the street so it is more visible. He commented that he does not anticipate that the proposed plan would drive successful businesses away. Instead, it is anticipated that property owners would invest more money in the sites and in the community.

Vice Chair Tibbott said one reason he supports the plan is that it would create opportunities for businesses and owners to improve properties, within some creative guidelines, so they are attractive and provide a benefit to the community. However, he suggested the Board consider extending the 25-foot (two story) height limit for commercial properties on 100th Avenue West all the way to 232nd Street to protect the residential properties located on 99th Avenue West.

Vice Chair Tibbott said he appreciates the comments related to green roofs. He said he also wants to make sure that any future commercial development is sensitive to the residential properties located on top of the hillsides.

Vice Chair Tibbott referred to earlier comments about how difficult it was to obtain information regarding the Westgate Plan from the City's website. He suggested that the Planning Board's page on the City's website is the best place to look for information regarding items that are scheduled on the Board's agenda for discussion and/or public hearing. For example, the Planning Board's meeting agenda provided links to all the documents that have been provided to date regarding the Westgate Plan.

Board Member Lovell reported that, at their recent meeting, the EDC discussed that many citizens are concerned that the bowling alley was demolished to accommodate the new Walgreen's store. It was suggested that perhaps the Westgate Plan could include some incentive to encourage the re-establishment of the bowling alley or the development of some other type of family-oriented entertainment facility. He noted that, as currently proposed, amusement establishments and local public facilities would be allowed as primary uses, but a conditional use permit would be required. Mr. Chave suggested that if the Board would like to allow family-oriented entertainment or recreational establishments as outright permitted uses, the best approach would be to change the use table rather than incorporating the idea into the incentive program.

Board Member Robles noted that a number of studies related to bowling alleys have connected the decline in American communities to the decline in bowling leagues. He suggested that the Westgate Plan affords the City a powerful tool to strategically insert some of the things they want Edmonds to represent. Board Member Lovell cautioned that the properties are privately owned and any redevelopment will likely be market driven. He questioned how bowling alleys would fit into today's economy.

Board Member Duncan reminded the Board that the proposed plan encourages amenities such as gathering places, cafes, fountains, plazas, etc. These gathering places can help create a center to build upon. He said he supports the plan and believes it will be great for the area. As the area is currently development, there is not a lot to preserve. Board Member Stewart added that it would be great if the plan encouraged child-friendly amenity space, as well.

Board Member Robles pointed out that electric cars and other technology is ever changing. He suggested that instead of limiting the plan to the existing trends in urban development, the plan should look to future trends.

Board Member Rubenkönig suggested that rather than using circles of different colors, the plan should use different shapes to identify the properties that are eligible for the fourth story height bonus and those that are limited to just two stories in height. Mr. Chave noted that the latest version of the map provides numbers within the circles to identify the maximum stories allowed.

Board Member Rubenkönig asked if maintenance agreements and performance bonds would still be required for all landscaping. Mr. Chave answered that maintenance agreements and performance bonds are standard code provisions.

Board Member Rubenkönig referred to Lines 13 and 14 on Page 33 of the plan and suggested that the examples of high efficiency irrigation applications should be eliminated. She cautioned that calling out specific examples of current technology can cause the plan to become outdated as technology changes. She suggested the sentence be changed to read, "Where irrigation is required, high efficiency irrigation applications will be used." The remainder of the Board agreed.

APPROVED

Board Member Rubenkönig also suggested that Lines 17 on Page 33 be changed by eliminating , “in accordance with City requirements then in place.” She explained that one expects that after initial growth, when the plants have matured and the roots are more secure, irrigation will be limited. The last part of the sentence is awkward and appears to mandate something that is not really required.

Board Member Rubenkönig asked if the proposed plan would require developers to plant trees consistent with the City’s approved Street Tree List. Mr. Chave pointed out that the Green Factor Program would actually require more extensive plantings than what would typically be required.

Board Member Rubenkönig referenced the Height Bonus Score Sheet and suggested that the term “car share parking” be changed to “shared parking,” which is a term used consistently throughout the City’s code. Mr. Chave pointed out that “car share parking” is entirely different than “shared parking,” and refers to parking space for cars that are shared amongst numerous people.

Board Member Rubenkönig expressed concern that the term “charging facilities for electric cars” is too limiting, since there are other transportation types that need to be charged. Board Member Duncan cautioned against rating charging facilities for other types of transportation the same as charging stations for cars. He pointed out that cars carry more than one person. He also pointed out that if developers could choose between providing electric charging stations for cars or for other types of vehicles, they would likely choose other types of vehicles since less space would be required. That would not be consistent with the intent of the proposed credit.

Board Member Rubenkönig pointed out that in the Height Bonus Score Sheet, a credit would be allowed for indoor/enclosed bicycle storage and changing facilities. Elsewhere in the code, “bike storage facilities” are referred to as “non-motorized transportation facilities.” Board Member Stewart said the intent is that developers would provide safe and secure places for people to store bicycles. Again, Board Member Duncan cautioned that, if given a choice between skateboard or bicycle storage, developers would like choose skateboard storage because it would take significantly less space. Board Member Ellis added that the idea of providing indoor/enclosed bicycle storage and changing facilities is becoming popular in Seattle. Many buildings are being retrofitted with these types of amenities to serve people who commute to work via bicycle.

Board Member Stewart recalled the Board’s previous discussion that more visual information should be provided when the plan is presented to the City Council. She expressed her belief that 3-D drawings would be helpful. Flat topographical maps are not sufficient to address the public’s fears about how the area could be developed if the plan is approved. Board Member Ellis recalled the Board’s concern about providing diagrams of potential development since many people will assume that is exactly what future development will look like.

Mr. Chave advised that staff would update the draft Westgate Plan and form-based code as per the Board’s discussion and bring it back for the Board’s final review on June 11th.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

The Board discussed potential dates for a retreat and agreed upon a tentative date of July 9th. They further agreed that the retreat discussion would include a staff presentation on the process and timeline for the upcoming Development Code Update and a discussion about the Planning Board’s use of technology. They agreed to forward other potential agenda topics to the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

DIRECTOR/PLANNING MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Hope provided a brief summary of her written Director’s Report, specifically noting:

- The work group continues to meet with a facilitator to identify a process and timeline for implementing the Strategic Action Plan. The first quarterly report will be presented to the City Council on June 14th.
- The Planning Board will discuss the prioritization and approach for moving forward with the Development Code Update at their upcoming retreat. The Board could also discuss the Comprehensive Plan update at their next retreat, or it could be scheduled for discussion at a separate meeting.

- The Transit Access Working Group, which she participates on, is focusing on how to make transit work better in Edmonds and the entire Puget Sound Region.
- At the May 21st Economic Development Commission meeting, the Downtown Business Improvement District provided an update of its accomplishments.
- The City is continuing to gather ideas and plan for a Green Resource Center on the second floor of City Hall. It is intended to be a place where people can see examples of green building, including low-impact stormwater design. Recently, a representative from the Northwest Ecobuilding Guild met with staff to provide information about “green building.” They provided some display materials that were set up at the front counter.
- The Five Corners Roundabout Project is underway and will result in some minor traffic delays. Long-term the project is expected to improve traffic flow.
- The Waterfront Festival is scheduled from May 30th to June 1st and is sponsored by the Edmonds Rotary Club.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Vice Chair Tibbott referred to the pedestrian fatality that happened in downtown Edmonds since the Board’s last meeting. He recalled that he participated in two sessions of the City’s Transportation Committee, and was very concerned with the level of walkways and pedestrian pathways in the City, especially around schools and parks. However, this particular tragedy would not have been addressed by any of the plans they discussed as part of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. As he discussed the accident with various people who live and walk in downtown Edmonds, including a friend who was an eyewitness, he has made the following observations:

- The City Transportation Plan discusses pedestrian safety from a lot of different angles, but none would have been helpful in this situation. It has been suggested that the City needs to come up with a different approach to address the interaction of cars and pedestrians in the downtown area.
- There have been numerous near misses between cars and pedestrians, and even some contact that has not been reported. Until these conflicts can be addressed, the City must consider ways to make the downtown more pedestrian friendly. They must better inform those who drive cars and create awareness that the downtown area typically has a greater concentration of walkers. It is particularly difficult to see pedestrians at night, and pedestrians should be encouraged to wear reflective clothing or lights.
- As he walks through downtown and other neighborhoods of the City, he is thankful that most drivers are aware of pedestrians and extend courtesy beyond what is normally expected to those who are walking. He would like to encourage everyone to do that.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Stewart thanked Mr. Chave, staff and fellow Board Members for their hard work through the years on the Westgate Plan. She also thanked the citizens who have participated throughout the process.

Board Member Lovell reported that, as a liaison to the Economic Development Commission (EDC), he attended their last meeting on May 21st where the Downtown Business Improvement District provided a thorough report that was relatable and very proactive. They are getting wonderful results and fantastic participation from businesses. They have hired a consultant to help with “branding” or “identifying” Edmonds, and a number of graphic boards were provided to illustrate potential ideas for marketing materials. Council Member Johnson suggested that the District attempt to align its efforts with the Snohomish County Tourism Bureau.

Board Member Lovell said the EDC also discussed their plan to prepare a white paper in support of the proposed Westgate Plan and form-based zoning. The white paper would be forwarded to the City Council prior to their hearing on the Planning Board’s recommendation.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.